

Prisoners

In the Dungeon of Humdrum

I OHN PENDEW died of a broken heart. Sixty-four years he had worked for the City; then he went on the pension roll. "I have nothing left to live for now," he said to his son. No work, nothing to interest him, only dull, tedious, empty days ahead. He grew listless and despondent. It was easier to let go of life than to hold on, and so he died.

Sixty-four years of pitiless routine; pushed along through the colorless days by the constant urge of his task that called him from his bed in the morning, sent him to his lunch at noon, and back again to his home at night to eat and sleep that he might be ready to repeat the same routine another day.

Faithful, hard-working John Pendew—his body was a machine; his spirit was in chains. Born to be a prince and a ruler in the Kingdom of the Soul, with the breath of the Living God in his nostrils, he forgot his birthright in the ceaseless grind of a dull, tedious, monotonous, commonplace routine. Free in the eyes of the law as a sovereign citizen of America, he buried himself for three score years, an unresisting prisoner in the narrow Dungeon of Humdrum.

Suddenly he was cast forth, and the world seemed empty to him. Time was his, with nothing to do in it. The pleasant paths of leisure invited him; books and magazines offered him the wisdom, the challenge, the inspiration of ages past and the greatest of all ages—the present; the hearts and souls of his wife and children were unknown countries for him to explore; the greatest war of all the ages was calling millions of his fellows into its fiery furnace and demanding the moral and material support of every lover of humanity; the wide world with its myriad needs and fascinations, its throbbing life and eager reach into the infinite, all were before him—but he had "nothing to live for." Free to refresh his soul with the wonders of earth and heaven, he pined for the old Dungeon of Humdrum, and died of "a broken heart."

The hope of America—the hope of the World—hangs on the greater freedom of mankind. THE LITERARY DIGEST has sounded many appeals to American citizenship, and always the quick response has come in mighty volume. Now it sends its challenge to the workers in office, and study, in the shop, and in the store, on the farm, and on the railroad, throughout the Nation, to a fuller freedom and a larger life.

Work is the noblest activity of the human body—when it is driven by a soul inspired.

Work is the process by which *things are done*, whether in the realms of human endeavor or in the universe of a wonder-working God.

Work translates thoughts and words into acts; wins victories in business, in politics, in the salvation of a world.

The work-places of America, where men and women strive in toil of brain and hand, are the foundation of the Nation's strength, the assurance of her safety, the promise of her power——

OR they are the festering sores in which her fatal disease grows and spreads; they are the dreary prison houses of her people; they are the threatening symptoms of her fall.

Which shall they be?

Men and women who love America, it depends on you. THE LITERARY DIGEST asks you to help lift the **work** of the Nation to a higher, nobler, pleasanter plane. "Where there is no vision the people perish." It is the business of THE LITERARY DIGEST to give American citizens a richer, broader vision of the things worth while in life, of the relation their personal work may bear to these things, of the opportunities America and the world are offering in prodigal abundance to the workers

whose minds are informed and trained, and whose spirits have come out from the slavery of the commonplace.

Three men are cutting stone up yonder in the Cathedral grounds. "What are you doing, No. 1?" "I am working for \$6.75 a day." "What are you doing, No. 2?" "I am squaring this stone." "What are you doing, No. 3?" "I am helping to build *that*," and this worker, with mind reaching out beyond his toil, and with a noble spirit of partnership with the best, points proudly up to the great unfinished Cathedral on the hill.

Two million American workers in business, in the professions, and the trades, are illuminating their toil each week by the inspiration which THE LITERARY DIGEST brings them every Saturday with its wealth of the world's news and thought.

"What are you doing, Senator Brown?"

"I am studying the great problem of a League of Nations in order that I may help to build a world peace. This nation-wide symposium in THE LITERARY DIGEST is giving me hope of success."

"What are you doing, Governor Smith?"

"I am planning to organize the people of my State to save it from the fearful disease of Bolshevism so vividly described in THE LITERARY DIGEST this week."

"What are you doing, Professor Jones?"

"I am arranging to have my classes take up this historical study of Poland, past and present, in THE LITERARY DIGEST, and the other articles on "Nations in Rebirth," which THE DIGEST is running, so that our pupils may have their minds broadened by a knowledge of the great events of the world's reconstruction, and may gain a sympathetic understanding of their new brothers and sisters who are winning their liberties in other lands."

"What are you doing, Pastor Seaton?"

"I am preparing to put up to my people, with all the power God will give me, this serious challenge in THE LITERARY DIGEST for unity and consecration in dealing with the great responsibilities of the Christian Church at this critical moment."

"What are you doing, business man, lawyer, banker, shipper, mechanic, farmer, housekeeper?"

"We are learning the facts of the world's activities, and studying the opinions of the world's thinkers, as they affect our own busy lives; we are finding out what America and the rest of the world need in this day of reconstruction and readjustment; we are considering our part in the mighty tasks of rebuilding the broken world and enlarging our sphere of influence. THE LITERARY DIGEST is telling us all these things every week, and we find, as we read it, that life is full of things worth while, and that we must have a very large share in its work and its rewards."

"What are **you** doing, citizen of New York and reader of this page?" The answer is for **you** to make; but be assured that if you drink deep each week of the strengthening tonic and impelling stimulant of THE LITERARY DIGEST, *You Will Never Rot In the Dreary Dungeon of Humdrum.*



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